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PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors and Authorizers

FROM: Sally Vaughn, Ph.D. *Sally*
Deputy Superintendent/Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Frequently Asked Questions on the Annual Education Report

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is releasing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the Annual Education Report (AER) that is to be used this summer by local education agencies (LEAs) and schools to meet federal and state reporting requirements.

The AER is designed to meet the federal requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (also known as NCLB) for an annual report. The report provides detailed data on state administered student assessment results, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results, teacher qualification information, and the state results for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). There is an AER for the state, each district and each school, populated with the appropriate information.

The AER reports and cover letters also meet the state requirement (PA 25) for reporting to parents and communities in an annual education report.

Please note that MDE has applied for a waiver to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001. This waiver has not yet been approved. Some reporting requirements may change in the future, but AERs and cover letters using the existing format will still be required in 2012.

We hope the attached list of FAQs will help you effectively use the AER. If you have additional questions, please email Mike Radke at radkem@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Consolidated Application Main Contacts

Attachment

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Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the Annual Education Report

1. Are local education agencies (LEAs) and their schools REQUIRED to use the state produced Annual Education Report (AER)?

ANSWER: Yes. All LEAs, including public districts, public school academies (PSAs), and intermediate school districts (ISDs) or regional education service agencies (RESAs), and their schools are required to use the state produced AER reports this summer to report their 2011-2012 performance. This is how Michigan schools and LEAs will meet the requirement of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (ESEA or NCLB).

Using the AER reduces the burden on nearly 850 LEAs and 4,000 schools to collect and format this complicated set of data for presentation to parents and community stakeholders in order to meet federal requirements. There remain only a few much simpler tasks for educators to perform. See #3 below.

The federal government audited the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) in 2006 and again in 2010 and issued a finding that the state, LEAs, and schools were not reporting all of the required federal elements of an annual education report. The federal government has reviewed the proposed state produced AER recently, and approved it as presenting all of the required elements. However, all LEAs and schools must present the AER reports and cover letters to parents and the community to be in compliance with ESEA.

2. What are the components of the AER that LEAs and schools must use?

ANSWER:

LEA Components:

- The "Combined District AER Report" and,
- a cover letter using the content outlined in the district template cover letter.

School Components:

- The "Combined School AER Report" and,
- a cover letter using the content outlined in the school template cover letter.

Both the report and the cover letter templates present information unique to the LEA or school and can be found on the MI School Data website:

<http://www.michigan.gov/mischooldata>.

The combined AER is different for each LEA or school and includes:

- Assessment data: Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) or Michigan Merit Exam (MME) and MI-Access assessment results
- Teacher Qualification data

- National Assessment of Educational Programs (NAEP) assessment date (state results)
- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results

The AER reports on all required subgroups are consistent with federal requirements with appropriate cell suppression for small "n" size subgroups.

3. What do the LEA and each school need to do to meet the reporting requirements?

ANSWER:

- The LEA must export the district AER and post it to the district website.
- Edit the district template cover letter addressing all of the requirements and post this with the district AER.
- The LEA must make paper copies of the AER report and cover letter available to parents and members of the community who do not have internet access.
- The district must announce to the parents and community that both the district and the school AERs are available and how to access them with the cover letters.

Each school must also:

- Post the school AER report and school cover letter on the school website, if the school has a website. If the school does not have its own website, these must be posted to the district website.
- The school must make paper copies of both documents available to parents and the school community members who do not have computer access.

4. When must the AERs and cover letters be posted and available?

ANSWER: LEAs and schools must post and make copies available 15 days before school starts in the fall of 2012, and no later than August 20, 2012. Providing this information 15 days before school starts allows parents to make a better choice about which school to select for their child. This information should remain available on the website(s) for one year, until the next year's report is prepared.

5. How will the state monitor implementation of these reporting requirements?

ANSWER: Both the state and federal government will be monitoring the district and school websites for the AER reports and cover letters. Between 100 and 200 LEAs and their schools will be monitored next year. The state will also ask to review the paper copies during on site monitoring and during other monitoring activities of the ESEA programs.

6. How do we preview the AER and find the template cover letters?

ANSWER: MDE will post preview data for the AER reports. Districts and schools should finalize the related cover letters after reviewing this data. The cover letter templates will not change from last year, except for updated specifics (such as date) to reflect the new data.

7. If my staff does not have a log-in name and password to the MI School Data website, how do I establish one for them?

ANSWER: Contact your ISD/RESA. For a list of these contacts, visit https://www.mischooldata.org/Downloads/isdresa_key_contacts_201112.pdf.

8. What will we find on the MI School Data website?

ANSWER: The content of the report is presented in several sections:

- Teacher Quality: This report identifies teacher qualifications in relation to requirements. Here you can find how many teachers in a school, district or across the state possess specific qualifications.
- Student Assessment: This report presents assessment information for English language arts and mathematics for grades 3 to 8 and grade 11 compared to targets for all students as well as subgroups of students. The report helps users to understand achievement progress within grades and schools, and to make comparisons to district, state and national achievement benchmarks.
- Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): The AYP report uses information from assessments, graduation and attendance rates to determine if the school and district are making AYP. Here you can identify how well your school and district are serving the overall academic needs of students.
- Combined Report: This report provides all of the information of Teacher Quality, Student Assessment and AYP for schools, districts, and the state in one convenient place. This is the report that districts and schools need to export and post to their websites with edited cover letters, and print for parents and community members who do not have internet access.

9. When will the REAL data be available for preview?

ANSWER: The 2011-2012 data needed for the reporting during the summer of 2012 will be available to LEAs and schools on or before August 6, 2012, as soon as the high school MME and AYP data is finalized. This information is embargoed until the state publicly releases the information. See #13.

10. Where does this data come from? Will we have a chance to appeal the data presented?

ANSWER: The data in the AER report has been extracted directly from a variety of state data bases. For example, the assessment data comes directly from the MEAP, MME, MI-Access, and NAEP reports prepared by the MDE,

Bureau of Assessment and Accountability (BAA). Teacher Quality data comes from the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) as reported in the Registry for Educational Personnel (REP). Some AYP data comes from BAA and some AYP data comes from CEPI.

LEAs and schools had the opportunity to appeal this data during the appeal or correction windows of the source reports. For example, a district that wanted to appeal assessment results or participation rates had the opportunity to do so during the assessment appeal window. Districts that wanted to correct the teacher quality data had the opportunity to do so shortly after submitting the REP data.

To appeal or correct next year's data, take full advantage of the assessment and AYP appeal or CEPI data correction opportunities. There are no appeals of data once it is part of the AER.

11. What can I do now to prepare for the release of the 2011-2012 AER?

ANSWER:

- Go to the MI School Data website and log in. Open the AER for your LEA or school. Familiarize yourself with the data from last year. Learn how to navigate the reports. Identify how to print the "Combined" report and how to export it to your website.
- Elementary and middle schools have received the 2011-2012 MEAP and MI-Access assessment data and their AYP status data. Familiarize yourself with this information. Begin drafting your AER cover letters using the templates found on the website.
- High schools will receive their preliminary MME assessment and AYP data soon. If it is not being appealed, you can also start drafting the district and high school AER cover letters. If it is being appealed, you will soon know the outcome of the appeal and can start drafting the LEA and high school cover letters.
- As soon as the 2011-2012 data is forwarded to the AER, it will be released to LEAs and districts. At this time you should do final edits on your cover letters, export and print the AER reports and cover letters for the LEA and schools, post the AER reports and cover letters on appropriate websites and make paper copies available to your parents and community. Public release of AER reports will occur approximately 15 days before Labor Day.
- Post your AER reports and cover letters as soon as the state publicly releases AYP results, but no later than 15 days before school starts on September 4, 2012. See #13.

12. Does a public school academy (PSA), ISD/RESA, or LEA that has ONLY ONE SCHOOL need to produce and distribute both district and school AERs and cover letters?

ANSWER: No. If there is only one school in your LEA, ISD/RESA or PSA, you only need to produce and distribute a school level AER report and cover letter. Do NOT produce, post or distribute district level reports or cover letters.

13. How will the 2011-2012 AYP public release and the AER tool public release be coordinated?

ANSWER: The AER reports with 2011-2012 data will be made publicly available on August 20, 2012. School districts will have access to data by August 6, 2012. The 2011-2012 AYP results are embargoed by MDE until the mid-August public AYP release.

RELEASE OF SCHOOL AND DISTRICT AYP DATA FROM THE ANNUAL EDUCATION REPORT IN ADVANCE OF THE PUBLIC RELEASE DATE IN MID-AUGUST BY THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MAY JEOPARDIZE THIS ADVANCE AER POSTING IN THE FUTURE.

14. Can I just link to the MI School Data site to provide the AER for my LEA and each of my schools?

ANSWER: No. Although the ability to bookmark a district or school report is available within the AER tool, we encourage you not to link to the MI School Data website to make you AERs available. Doing so increases user traffic on the AER servers and the resulting overload may disable access for everyone. The bookmark will only supply access to the data report and not the narrative cover letter that is required.

Instead, please export your LEA and school AER reports and post them on your LEA or school websites with the appropriate cover letters. Directions for this process are:

- Log in to the MI School Data website:
<http://www.michigan.gov/mischooldata>
- For access to the site, contact your ISD system administrator. Refer to #7 for detailed information.
- Click on "Annual Education Report" button. You will need to log in again to access the AER browser.
- Click on "Combined Report" button.
- Find your ISD name and LEA/district or school name from the drop down to produce the appropriate AER. Click on the "View Results" button to generate the AER report
- The report is available for review by clicking on each of the tabs for Student Assessment Data, AYP Data, Teacher Quality Data, and NAEP data.
- To export, scroll to the bottom of any of the above mentioned tabs and click on the "Export All Reports" button. Click "Save" and specify where on your computer you would like to save the PDF file.

- You have successfully saved the data portion of the LEA or school AER. Now you must download and complete the appropriate cover letter from the template available under the "Cover Letters" button on the left hand navigation bar. Once the cover letter is edited and approved, the letter must be posted with the AER report on the appropriate LEA or school website.
15. We understand that MDE is applying for the ESEA flexibility waiver which might remove the requirement for the current AER. Will this relieve LEAs and schools from having to publish this report and cover letter?

ANSWER: No. The flexibility waiver will not exempt the state, LEAs or schools from presenting AER reports in 2012. We may be able to get relief from producing these reports after 2013, but we will have to replace them with an improved report for parents. The improved reports will require federal approval before implementation.

The second reason we must maintain the current reports is that the AER report and cover letters are also required by state law, in part or in whole. These state requirements are not impacted by the Flexibility Waiver of the federal programs. We will have to work out these details in the future.